



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement of the United States Working Session III 2006 Annual Security Review Conference

As delivered by the Honorable Powell A. Moore
Head of Delegation and Representative of the Secretary of Defense
June 28, 2006

Thank You, Mr. Chairman.

The United States would also like to thank our three keynote speakers for their important presentations. We would like to comment briefly to remarks made by Dr. Hernes. Dr. Hernes has made a highly compelling and important observation. She points out that a major problem facing many women in crisis and conflict situations is their own physical security and the safety of their children.

Deplorably, the threat to the safety and security of these women and children sometimes comes from the very ones who are assigned to protect them. It is reprehensible that persons with the responsibility to protect civilians in a destabilized region or to promote the rule of law would encourage human trafficking or sexual exploitation of the very population they were sent to protect. Such behavior by persons serving on peacekeeping missions weakens the rule of law, strengthens criminal networks, and undermines the mission's own purpose. The vast majority of peacekeepers are honorable men and women performing vital tasks under difficult circumstances. However, the misdeeds of the few tarnish the reputations of the whole and are totally unacceptable.

In response to these concerns, the OSCE Ljubljana Ministerial Council meeting adopted a decision to ensure the highest standards of conduct and accountability of persons serving on peacekeeping forces and other international missions.

Significantly, OSCE countries have pledged to step up efforts to prevent military and civilian personnel deployed abroad from engaging in trafficking in human beings or in exploiting victims of trafficking. Countries with deployed military and civilian personnel have also agreed to work cooperatively with authorities in countries hosting such missions, in efforts to combat trafficking in human beings.

We now have to ensure implementation of our commitments. Gender sensitivity must become part of the organizational structure and culture of all military forces.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.